

# Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 7 November 1991

## *The week in statistics ...*

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## Imports widen September current account deficit

The seasonally adjusted current account deficit for September 1991 rose \$730 million to \$1,332 million, due largely to an increase of \$626 million in imports.

The balance on goods and services recorded a deficit of \$46 million, a turnaround \$713 million on the surplus recorded in August.

The merchandise trade surplus fell \$634 million to \$300 million. Merchandise exports fell marginally to \$4,637 million while merchandise imports rose 17 per cent to \$4,337 million.

The net services deficit rose 30 per cent to \$346 million. The net income deficit rose marginally to \$1,479 million, while the net unrequited transfers surplus fell 6 per cent to \$193 million.

In original terms, merchandise exports were virtually unchanged at \$4,584 million. Non-rural exports rose \$39 million or 1 per cent. The major contributors to the rise were metal ores and minerals, up \$79 million or 11 per cent; 'other' mineral fuels, up \$51 million or 22 per cent; and 'other' metals, up \$26 million or 7 per cent. The largest fall was recorded in gold, down \$79 million or 19 per cent.

Rural exports fell \$37 million or 3 per cent. Falls recorded in 'other' rural, cereals and sugar totalling \$135 million were partly offset by rises in wool and meat totalling \$98 million.

Merchandise imports rose \$194 million or 5 per cent. The largest rises were recorded in fuels, up \$83 million or 53 per cent; civil aircraft, up \$66 million or 64 per cent (due to the import of a Qantas aircraft valued at \$169 million in September compared with the import of a Qantas aircraft valued at \$103 million in August); chemicals, up \$32 million or 8 per cent; and metals and metal manufactures, up \$28 million or 14 per cent. The largest falls occurred in food, beverages and tobacco, down \$14 million or 7 per cent and 'other' transport equipment, down \$13 million or 18 per cent.

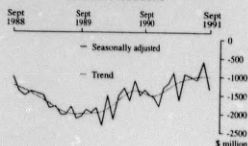
In original terms, the balance on current account deficit for the three months ending September 1991 was \$3,835 million, which represents a fall of \$1,082 million from the deficit of \$4,917 million for the corresponding three months of 1990-91.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, CURRENT ACCOUNT  
\$ million

	August 1991		September 1991	
	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Original	Seasonally adjusted
Balance on merchandise trade	607	934	415	300
Net services	-331	-267	-490	-346
Net income	-1,465	-1,474	-1,461	-1,479
Net unrequited transfers	238	205	200	193
Balance on current account	-951	-602	-1,336	-1,332

For further information, order the publication *Balance of Payments, Australia* (5301.0), or contact Dennis Hensman on (06) 252 6689 or Neil Batty on (06) 252 5540.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS  
CURRENT ACCOUNT



## Petrol up, mortgage charges down as CPI stays low

The Consumer Price Index increased by 0.6 per cent in the September quarter 1991 following an increase of 0.1 per cent in the June quarter.

The annual change, from September quarter 1990 to September quarter 1991, was 3.3 per cent, down slightly from last quarter's annual movement of 3.4 per cent. This figure is the smallest annual increase since December quarter 1984 (up 2.6%). While annual CPI increases of less than 4 per cent have been rare in recent times, there was a period of 19 consecutive quarters (from March 1966 to September 1970) where annual movements were all below 4 per cent.

Petrol prices (up 5.6%) were the most significant contributor to the rise this quarter. They increased in all cities, following two quarters of falls.

Other significant increases were hospital and medical services (up 4.5%) due to rises in health insurance premiums; cigarettes and tobacco (up 3.6%) where State taxes in Sydney and Canberra were the main contributor to the rise; and motor vehicles (up 1.5%).

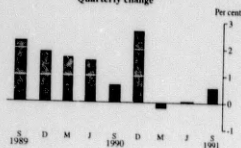
Mortgage interest charges fell by 5.4 per cent and were the largest single offsetting factor this quarter. This was the result of a significant fall in mortgage interest rates, coupled with a small rise in the value of mortgage debt. Mortgage interest rates have now declined by a total of 19.5 per cent in the six quarters since March quarter 1990.

Other significant falls occurred in vehicle insurance (down 4.7%) due to changes in compulsory third party insurance in Sydney, and furniture (down 1.4%) where there was an increased incidence of discounting.

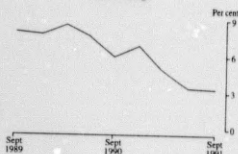
### CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, SEPTEMBER QUARTER 1991 Weighted average of eight capital cities Percentage change

	From previous quarter	From corresponding quarter of previous year
Health and personal care	1.9	11.2
Tobacco and alcohol	1.3	8.3
Household equipment and operation	0.9	3.6
Food	0.6	3.4
Clothing	-0.3	3.3
Transportation	1.9	3.2
Recreation and education	0.9	3.0
Housing	-2.0	-2.6
<i>All groups</i>	0.6	3.3
<i>All groups excluding housing</i>	1.0	4.3
<i>All groups excluding health and personal care</i>	0.5	2.8

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX  
Quarterly change



Annual change

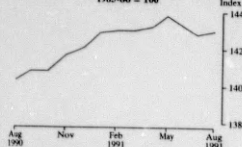


### CAPITAL CITY CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, SEPTEMBER QUARTER 1991 Percentage change from previous quarter

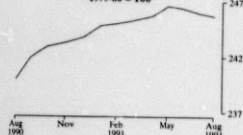
Melbourne	0.7
Sydney	0.6
Brisbane	0.4
Adelaide	0.7
Perth	0.5
Hobart	0.9
Darwin	0.3
Canberra	1.3

Weighted average of eight capital cities 0.6

PRICES OF HOUSE BUILDING MATERIALS  
1985-86 = 100



PRICES OF NON-DWELLING  
BUILDING MATERIALS  
1979-80 = 100



## Building material prices — lowest annual increase since the 1960's

The annual rate of price increase for building materials are at their lowest level for more than twenty years. For materials used in house building, the annual increase from August 1990 to August 1991 was 1.9 per cent, while for materials used in other forms of building, the annual increase was 2.4 per cent.

In terms of monthly movement, prices of materials used in house building increased by 0.1 per cent from July to August 1991. The main increases in house building materials were for cupboards, clay bricks and concrete tiles.

For materials used in other forms of building, prices decreased 0.1 per cent between July and August with reinforcing steel bar, fabric and mesh and structural steel recording the main decreases.

PRICES OF BUILDING MATERIALS, AUGUST 1991  
Percentage change

City	House building		Other than house building	
	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	0.1	1.9	0.1	3.2
Melbourne	0.1	1.3	-0.5	2.0
Brisbane	0.3	3.7	0.2	2.8
Adelaide	-0.6	1.9	-0.4	2.2
Perth	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.9
Hobart	0.1	4.2	0.4	3.9
Weighted average of six State capitals	0.1	1.9	-0.1	2.4
Darwin	— Not available —		0.7	5.1
Canberra	0.7	4.6	-0.2	4.6

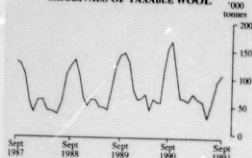
For further information, order the publications *Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6408.0)* and *Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities (6407.0)*, or contact Mark Dickson (06) 252 6198.

## Wool receivals well down

September 1991 wool receivals by brokers and dealers were 30.5 per cent below the September 1990 level. For the first three months of the financial year, receivals have fallen by 24.8 per cent on the same period last year. Falls have been recorded in all States with the largest recorded in South Australia (33.7%) and Western Australia (28.5%). The combined factors of lower prices, reduced flock size and dry conditions have contributed to the significant fall.

Continued ...

RECEIVALS OF TAXABLE WOOL



While receipts in September 1991 actually rose by 13.1 per cent over August, the graph at left suggests that the 1991 seasonal peak in wool delivery could be well below the peaks of recent years.

Total red meat production rose 3.1 per cent for September 1991 compared with August 1991 (a fall of 2.1% in seasonally adjusted terms). However when compared with September 1990, production fell 4.3 per cent.

LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTERED, SEPTEMBER 1991

	Percentage change	
	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Cattle	1.9	0.8
Calves	-15.5	-13.7
Sheep	7.1	-13.1
Lambs	9.1	-2.9
Pigs	-4.0	-1.3

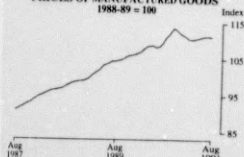
For further information, order the publication *Livestock Products, Australia* (7215.0), or contact Marion Long on (06) 252 5337.

## Manufactured goods prices — more falls than rises in 1991

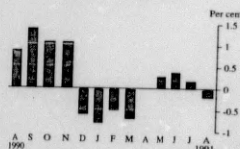
Prices of manufactured goods fell by 0.2 per cent in August 1991. This was the fourth time in 1991 that the price index for articles produced by all manufacturing industry has recorded a decline (see second graph). The index rose by just 1.5 per cent between August 1990 and August 1991.

Small decreases were recorded for about one third of the items in the index in August 1991. The main contributions to the decrease came from lower prices for non-ferrous metals, refined petroleum products and meat products.

These decreases were partly offset by price rises for about 40 per cent of the items included in the index. The only significant increase was for beer.

PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS  
1988-89 = 100

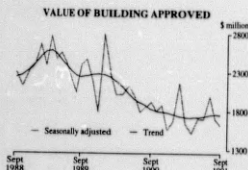
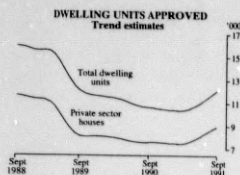
Change from previous month



PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS, AUGUST 1991

	Percentage change	
Manufacturing sector	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Transport equipment	-0.2	3.6
Chemical products	-0.5	3.4
Clothing and footwear	0.1	3.0
Other industrial machinery	0.3	1.7
Fabricated metal products	-0.3	1.5
Food and beverages	0.0	1.2
Petroleum products	-1.9	-2.1
Basic metal products	-1.3	-6.3
Total manufacturing	-0.2	1.5

For further information, order the publication *Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia* (6412.0), or contact Peter Cordy on (06) 252 5541.



## Housing approvals rise slightly

The total number of dwelling units approved in September 1991 rose by 2.7 per cent in seasonally adjusted terms despite a slight fall in private sector house approvals.

While monthly building approvals data are prone to volatility, the trend estimates (which largely remove seasonal and irregular effects) for the total number of dwelling units approved continue to exhibit the steady upward growth evident since February 1991. The trend estimates for private sector houses are also still showing an increase, despite the 2.1 per cent fall in seasonally adjusted approvals in September.

DWELLING UNITS APPROVED, SEPTEMBER 1991

	Number	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Private sector houses —			
Original	8,763	- 3.8	20.6
Seasonally adjusted	8,748	- 2.1	17.8
Trend estimate	8,945	2.5	17.7
Total dwelling units —			
Original	12,136	- 1.2	17.2
Seasonally adjusted	12,198	2.7	15.6
Trend estimate	12,087	2.6	13.9

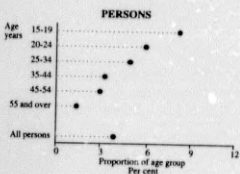
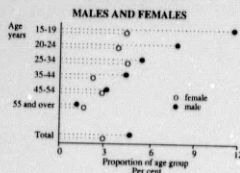
The seasonally adjusted value of total building approved (residential and non-residential) fell by 5.0 per cent to \$1,615.8 million from August to September 1991 and was 15.7 per cent lower than the September 1990 estimate.

The growth in trend estimates for the value of new residential building approved has been confirmed with the release of September 1991 data. In contrast, the trend series for the value of non-residential building approved (which is only available to June 1991) continues to decline sharply and is at its lowest level since February 1986. The trend for the total value of building approved remains relatively flat as a result of these offsetting movements.

VALUE OF BUILDING APPROVED, SEPTEMBER 1991

	\$ million	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
New residential building —			
Original	958.7	-1.7	15.2
Seasonally adjusted	977.2	1.5	13.7
Trend estimate	976.1	2.6	13.7
Total building —			
Original	1,623.6	-9.3	-10.9
Seasonally adjusted	1,615.8	-5.0	-15.7
Trend estimate	1,751.5	1.1	-4.1

**VICTIMS OF CRIME, SOUTH AUSTRALIA**  
12 months to April 1991



## Reporting crime in South Australia

More than one in ten householders in South Australia can expect to have their house broken into or an attempt made, every year. In the twelve months to April 1991, 7 per cent of South Australian homes were broken into at least once, and 5 per cent suffered at least one attempted break and entry, indicating an estimated 55,600 homes suffered at least one actual or attempted break and entry.

Adelaide households were twice as likely to be a target as those in the country, with 12 per cent of Adelaide households being victims, compared with 6 per cent of country households.

**VICTIMS OF CRIME, SOUTH AUSTRALIA**  
Twelve months to April 1991

Type of offence	Number ('000)			Proportion (per cent)	
	Victims	Non-victims	Total	Victims	Non-victims
<b>Households —</b>					
Break and enter	37.4	502.6	540.0	6.9	93.1
Attempted break and enter	27.8	512.2	540.0	5.2	94.8
Break and enter and/or attempted break and enter	55.6	484.4	540.0	10.3	89.7
<b>Persons —</b>					
Robbery	16.0	1,103.1	1,119.1	1.4	98.6
Assault	29.3	1,089.8	1,119.1	2.6	97.4
Robbery and/or assault	43.1	1,076.0	1,119.1	3.9	96.1

Among other results of the April survey of Crime and Safety in South Australia were:

- ☐ The number of people who were victims of assault (29,300) was nearly double the number who were victims of robbery (16,000).
- ☐ Six people out of every ten believe their neighbourhood has a crime or public nuisance problem, and about half of those believe that house-breaking is the main problem.
- ☐ Victims were much more likely to report a break and enter offence to police than an assault as the table below shows.

**REPORTING OF CRIME, SOUTH AUSTRALIA**  
Twelve months to April 1991

Type of offence	Number ('000)			Proportion (per cent)	
	Told police	Did not tell police	All victims	Told police	Did not tell police
<b>Household victims —</b>					
Break and enter	29.7	7.8	37.4	79.3	20.7
Attempted break and enter	9.7	18.1	27.8	34.9	65.1
<b>Person victims —</b>					
Robbery	10.5	5.4	16.0	66.0	34.0
Assault	9.1	20.1	29.3	31.2	68.8

## Statistics Weekly

### Synopsis of articles, October 1991

3 October 1991

#### Current account deficit slashed by record trade surplus

The seasonally adjusted current account deficit for August 1991 fell \$509 million to \$575 million.

#### Manufacturing prices stable

Prices of goods manufactured in Australia rose by a slight 0.2 per cent in July 1991.

#### Manufacturing in August ...

The publication Manufacturing Production, Australia, Preliminary (8301.0) contains up-to-date time series data on the production of twenty-seven major indicators of production (twenty-five seasonally adjusted).

#### Rate of job vacancy loss slows

The estimated number of job vacancies, seasonally adjusted, fell 2.1 per cent from 25,700 in May 1991 to 25,100 in August 1991.

#### Farm machinery sales stalled

Sales of new tractors for farm use fell to their lowest level for at least 36 years in the 1990-91 financial year.

#### TRANSTATS — first version released

TRANSTATS is a micro computer package of statistical information from the Motor Vehicle Census as at 30 September 1988.

#### Fourth straight rise in vehicle registration trend

The August 1991 trend estimate for total new motor vehicle registrations rose 0.8 per cent to 42,167 vehicles (from 41,818 in July).

#### Building materials prices continue to decrease

Prices of building materials decreased for the second successive month in July 1991.

10 October 1991

#### Housing approvals trend still moving upwards

The number of total dwelling units approved in August 1991 fell by 1.2 per cent in seasonally adjusted terms.

#### Home lending now nearly 50% above last year's level

Seasonally adjusted housing finance commitments for July 1991 (excluding alterations and additions) totalled \$2367.8 million, an increase of \$167.7 million (7.6%) over June 1991 and an increase of \$749.4 million (46.3%) over July 1990.

#### 'No vacancies at all' still major difficulty for unemployed

The belief that there were 'no vacancies at all' continues to be the dominant reported difficulty experienced by unemployed persons in finding work.

#### Veal production still low despite August increase

The slaughtering of calves for August 1991 showed a substantial rise of 59 per cent when compared with July 1991. As a result, veal production for August 1991 (4,582 tonnes) increased by 26 per cent when compared with July 1991.

#### New version of geographical classification manual

A revised edition of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) Manual has been released.

17 October 1991

#### Unemployment rate tops 10%

The unemployment rate in September 1991 (seasonally adjusted) rose by 0.4 percentage points to 10.2 per cent, the highest rate recorded by the labour force survey since September 1983.

#### Behind the numbers — some facts about the labour force survey

The Monthly Labour Force Survey is by far the largest household survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

#### Retailers consolidate their turnover gains

Turnover of retail and selected service industries rose by 1.4 per cent seasonally adjusted in August 1991.

#### Small businesses in profile

Nearly 800,000 small businesses were operating in Australia in 1989-90 comprising 95 per cent of the nation's 844,000 business enterprises.

## Synopsis of articles, October 1991 – continued

### 24 October 1991

#### Crop production fell before the drought took hold

The production of many major crops declined in the 1989-90 season.

#### Export prices turn down again

Export prices fell by a large 2.2 per cent between July and August 1991.

#### Business finance increases to highest level for 6 months ...

Business finance commitments (i.e. commercial finance commitments plus lease finance commitments) increased by 11 per cent in July 1991 compared with June 1991, reaching the highest monthly level since January 1991.

#### ... as consumer finance also rises

Consumer finance (housing finance plus personal finance) for July 1991 increased by 15 per cent over June 1991.

### 31 October 1991

#### Still no joy for car makers

The trend estimate for total new vehicle registrations remains flat following falls in both actual and seasonally adjusted registrations in September 1991.

#### Finance for home construction remains buoyant

Seasonally adjusted housing finance commitments for August 1991 (excluding alterations and additions) totalled \$2,313.7 million, a decrease of \$56.9 million (2.4%) over July 1991 but an increase of \$702.1 million (43.6%) over August 1990.

#### Tourist accommodation: sixteen year low in occupancy rates

The room occupancy rate in hotels, motels and guest houses for the June quarter 1991, 47.6 per cent, was the lowest recorded occupancy rate since the Australian Bureau of Statistics series commenced in 1975.

#### Manufacturing in September ...

Manufacturing production movements in tabular form, providing a general overview of the sector in September 1991.

#### Small fall in manufacturing materials prices

The price index of materials used in manufacturing industries fell by 0.4 per cent between July and August 1991.

#### New guide to superannuation data

This week the Australian Bureau of Statistics launched a new publication which should help users of superannuation statistics find the information they need much more quickly.

## This week in brief ...

### □ Overseas visitor arrivals

The number of overseas visitor arrivals in July 1991 was 208,300, 12 per cent more than in July 1990 (185,400). The major source countries were: Japan with 50,100 (24% of total), New Zealand with 47,600 (23%), the USA with 27,600 (13%) and the United Kingdom with 16,100 (8%). These four major source countries accounted for 68 per cent of all visitor arrivals.

Source: *Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia, July 1991* (3401.0).

### □ Industrial disputes

In July 1991 there were 131 disputes in progress involving 200,000 employees and the loss of 172,000 working days. In the twelve months ending July 1991 there were 1,195 disputes in progress involving 881,400 employees. The number of working days lost was reported as 1,706,300, the highest number since the twelve months to September 1988 (1,711,500).

Source: *Industrial Disputes, Australia, July 1991* (6321.0).

## Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- through its bookshops
- by mail order (including subscription)
- by facsimile
- electronically.

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### Suggestions

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

Robert Nixon  
Editor  
*Statistics Weekly*  
(06) 252 6104

## All the week's releases: 30 October to 5 November

### General

Publications Issued in October 1991 (1102.0; \$5.50)  
Publications Advice, 1 November 1991 (1105.0; free)  
Publications Advice, 5 November 1991 (1105.0; free)  
Statistics Weekly, 31 October 1991 (1318.0; \$4.00)  
Australian Economic Indicators, October 1991 (1350.0; \$24.00)  
Monthly Summary of Statistics, NSW, October 1991 (1305.1; \$13.50)  
Economic Indicators, NSW, October 1991 (1307.1; \$5.00)  
Monthly Summary of Statistics, Vic., October 1991 (1303.2; \$10.00)  
Monthly Summary of Statistics, Qld, October 1991 (1304.3; \$9.00)  
Monthly Summary of Statistics, WA, October 1991 (1305.5; \$10.00)  
Economic Indicators, WA, October 1991 (1307.5; \$5.50)  
Monthly Summary of Statistics, SA, October 1991 (1303.4; \$9.00)

### Demography

Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Aust., July 1991 (3401.0; \$6.00)  
Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Aust., 1990 (3404.0; \$17.50)  
Estimated Resident Population by Age and Sex in Statistical Local Areas, SA, June 1990 (3204.4; \$10.00)

### Social statistics

National Health Survey: Diabetes, Australia 1989-90 (4371.0; \$5.00)  
— new issue

### National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Balance of Payments, Aust., September 1991 (5301.0; \$15.00)  
Foreign Trade, Aust.: Merchandise Exports, August 1991 (5432.0; \$9.00)  
Personal Finance, Aust., August 1991 (5642.0; \$5.50)  
Lease Finance, Aust., August 1991 (5644.0; \$5.50)

### Labour statistics and prices

Industrial Disputes, Aust., July 1991 (6321.0; \$7.00)  
Consumer Price Index, September Qtr 1991 (6401.0; \$11.00)  
Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, August 1991 (6407.0; \$10.00)  
Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, August 1991 (6408.0; \$7.50)  
Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Aust., August 1991 (6412.0; \$10.00)

### Agriculture

Livestock Products, Aust., September 1991 (7215.0; \$7.00)  
Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, SA, 1989-90 (7503.4; \$15.00)

### Secondary industry and distribution

Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Food, Drink, Tobacco, Stock and Poultry Food, August 1991 (8359.0; \$10.00)  
Actual and Expected Private Mineral Exploration, Aust., June Qtr 1991 (8412.0; \$7.50)  
Building Approvals, Aust., September 1991 (8731.0; \$12.50)  
Construction Activity at Constant Prices, Aust., June Qtr 1991 (8782.0; \$10.00)  
Production Statistics, NSW, June 1991 (8304.1; \$7.50)  
Building Approvals, NSW, September 1991 (8731.1; \$10.00)  
Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, NSW, July 1991 (8741.1; \$10.00)  
Building Approvals, Vic., September 1991 (8731.2; \$10.00)

**Secondary industry and distribution — continued**

Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities,  
Vic., August 1991 (8741.2; \$10.00)

Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities,  
WA, August 1991 (8741.5; \$10.00)

Building Approvals, SA, September 1991 (8731.4; \$10.00)

Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, SA,  
August 1991 (8741.4; \$10.00)

**Transport**

Motor Vehicle Registrations, Vic., September 1991 (9303.2; \$10.00)

Vehicles on Register, WA, June 1991 (9305.5; \$10.00)

**Calendar of key releases**

Expected releases over the fortnight to 19 November 1991

**November****7**

The Labour Force, Australia, October 1991, Preliminary  
(6202.0; \$10.00)

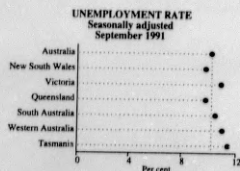
The Labour Force, Australia — Preliminary Data on Floppy  
Disk, October 1991 (6271.0; \$65.00)

**12**

Retail Trade, Australia, September 1991 (8501.0; \$10.00)

**The latest ...**

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to  
5 November 1991



	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Mar. qtr 91)*	-8.4	-22.7	0	-8.9	-7.0	-16.9	n.a.	n.a.	-10.2
Retail turnover (Aug. 91) (trend estimate)	4.3	1.7	2.9	5.4	5.0	5.0	n.a.	9.6	3.7
New motor vehicle registrations (Sept. 91)† (a)	-21.5	-32.5	-14.4	-27.5	-8.2	-11.6	-28.5	28.8	-21.2
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Sept. 91)	15.0	12.7	28.5	-3.5	21.2	29.6	7.1	16.6	17.2
Value of total building work done (June qtr 91)	-8.3	-28.6	4.7	-11.4	-27.9	-0.5	39.9	18.1	-13.2
Employed persons (Sept. 91)*	-1.7	-3.8	-0.6	-2.6	-1.5	-1.9	1.9	1.0	-2.1
Capital city consumer price index (Sept. qtr 91)	2.8	3.9	3.3	4.1	1.9	3.6	3.3	3.7	3.3
Average weekly earnings (full- time adult ordinary time) (May 91)	3.6	5.2	5.7	6.5	8.1	3.1	5.8	5.6	5.0
Population (Dec. 90)	1.1	1.3	2.3	1.1	2.2	1.1	1.2	2.5	1.5
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (June qtr 91)	-1.9	-1.4	7.8	-4.5	-2.2	2.6	-4.6	-7.8	0.1

\* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas., NT and ACT.  
(a) Refer to footnote (e) on next page.

## Key national indicators – consolidated to 5 November 1991

				Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
				Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
Period							
<b>National production</b>							
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 91	92,362	93,956	-1.2	-1.2
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	62,148	63,912	-1.0	-2.4
<b>Industrial activity</b>							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 91	6,304	6,011	-8.9	-13.4
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	4,808	4,577	-8.2	-13.4
Expected new capital expenditure		"	Six months to Dec. 91	12,756	n.a.	n.a.	-18.5
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	Aug. 91	7,577.9	7,778.7	1.4	4.0
	— 1984-85 prices	"	June qtr 91	14,569.4	15,058.0	-1.0	-2.2
New motor vehicle registrations (e)		no.	Sept. 91	40,408	40,010	-5.3	-21.2
Dwelling unit approvals		"	Sept. 91	12,136	12,198	2.7	15.6
Value of all building approvals		\$m	"	1,624	1,616	-4.9	-15.7
Value of total building work done	— current prices	"	June qtr 91	6,253	6,264	-5.1	-13.2
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	3,963	3,970	-4.7	-13.3
Manufacturers' sales	— current prices	"	June qtr 91	33,638	33,765	-1.7	-3.7
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	23,225	23,337	-1.8	-5.0
Expected manufacturers' sales		"	Six months to Dec. 91	71,691	n.a.	n.a.	-5.0
<b>Labour</b>							
Employed persons (f)		'000	Sept. 91	7,762.8	7,705.2	-0.3	-2.1
Unemployment rate † (f)		%	"	10.0	10.2	0.4	2.7
Participation rate † (f)		"	"	63.7	63.4	0.0	-0.5
Job vacancies		'000	Aug. 91	25.6	25.1	-2.1	-46.9
Average weekly overtime per employee		hours	"	1.07	1.11	-1.0	-12.2
<b>Prices, profits and wages</b>							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0		Sept. qtr 91	215.7	n.a.	0.6	3.3
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries	1984-85 = 100.0		Aug. 91	119.9	n.a.	-0.4	-2.0
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1988-89 = 100.0		Aug. 91	111.2	n.a.	-0.2	1.5
Company profits before income tax	\$m		June qtr 91	2,469	2,697	7.4	-23.1
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)	\$		May 91	560.80	n.a.	-0.6	5.0
<b>Interest rates (b) (monthly average)</b>							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum		Sept. 91	9.55	n.a.	-0.65	-4.00
10-year Treasury bonds †	"		"	10.30	n.a.	-0.35	-3.35
<b>Balance of payments</b>							
Exports of merchandise	\$m		Sept. 91	4,584	4,637	0.2	9.9
Imports of merchandise	"		"	4,169	4,337	16.9	6.1
Balance on merchandise trade (c)	"		"	415	300	-67.9	227.3
Balance of goods and services (c)	"		"	-75	-46	n.a.	76.8
Balance on current account (c)	"		"	-1,336	-1,332	-121.3	2.6
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0		June qtr 91	n.a.	100.2	1.2	-5.2
<b>Foreign investment</b>							
Net foreign debt	\$m		30 June 91	131,340	n.a.	-1.7	3.7
Net foreign liabilities	"		"	177,295	n.a.	2.3	7.0
<b>Exchange rates (monthly average)</b>							
SUS	per SA		Sept. 91	0.7927	n.a.	1.3	-3.9
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0		"	60.5	n.a.	0.2	-1.8
<b>Other indicators</b>							
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million		Mar. 91	17.3	n.a.	0.4	1.5
Overseas visitor arrivals	'000		July 91	208	215	4.2	12.7

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for export to that for imports. (e) September 1991 is not strictly comparable with September 1990 due to the introduction by motor vehicle registration authorities of a more accurate identification and classification system. (f) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 7 November 1991.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available. Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 10). Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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